Shortage of coal during Tenth Plan

*453. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the Tenth Plan Draft the coal demand of the country in 2006-2007 is projected at 511 million tonnes;

(b) if so, whether there will be shortage of coal as per this report;

(c) whether the private investment will become inevitable; and

(d) if so, whether Government have taken any step in this regard, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) The Working Group on Coal and Lignite constituted by the Planning Commission for formulation of Tenth Five Year Plan has estimated 453.29 million tonnes coal demand in the year 2006-07. The projected coal supply from domestic sources in 2006-07 is 399.73 million tonnes, leaving a gap of 53.56 million tonnes.

(c) and (d) The projected gap between demand and supply at the end of the Tenth Plan and later cannot be fully met by the public sector coal companies in view of resource constraints. As such, it is essential to enable private investment in coal exploration/mining. The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 which seeks to allow Indian companies, including those in the private sector, to carry on exploration/mining of coal and lignite even for non captive and commercial purposes, is pending in Parliament.

Central assistance to Andhra Pradesh for old age pension

*454. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Andhra Pradesh old age pension under Central Pension Scheme is being paid as Central assistance only the State is not contributing anything towards this, whereas most of others States are contributing and paying old age pension at higher rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons cited by State Government in doing so; and

(c) whether Government propose to increase Central assistance to the State so as to enhance old age pension?